

FIELD KEY TO THE PLANT COMMUNITIES OF SCOTTS BLUFF NATIONAL MONUMENT

1. Site more than 25% vegetated.
 2. More than 25% of site covered by woody plants **more than** 2 m tall.
 3. Broadleaf trees predominate; site riverine or affected by irrigation canal
Populus deltoides-(*Salix amygdaloides*)/*Salix exigua* **Floodplain Woodland**
 3. Needleleaf (conifer) trees predominate; upland sites and draws.
 4. *Pinus ponderosa* and *Juniperus scopulorum* predominate; canopies usually intermingled
Pinus ponderosa/*Juniperus scopulorum* **Woodland**
 4. *Juniperus scopulorum* predominates (*Pinus ponderosa* cover less than 10%); canopies usually intermingled
Juniperus scopulorum/*Oryzopsis micrantha* **Woodland**
 2. Less than 25% of site covered by woody plants **more than** 2 m tall.
 5. More than 25% of site covered by woody plants **less than** 2 m tall.
 6. Site riverine or palustrine. Herbaceous stratum poorly represented or absent; *Salix exigua* dominant; stream margins
Salix exigua **Shrubland**
 6. Site upland (including intermittently flooded draws).
 7. Site on middle slopes of bluffs; *Cercocarpus montanus* dominant
Cercocarpus montanus/*Bouteloua curtipendula* **Shrubland**
 7. Site on low slopes or in draws; *Rhus aromatica*, *Symphoricarpos occidentalis* dominant
Symphoricarpos occidentalis **Shrubland**
 5. Less than 25% of site covered by woody plants **less than** 2 m tall (except for small inclusions).
 8. Site riverine or palustrine wetland.
 9. Site riverine, confined to floodplain, soils intermittently flooded to saturated by river.

10. Soil saturated most of season; *Typha latifolia*, *Eleocharis erythropoda*, *Scirpus pungens* among dominants; annual and biennial plants uncommon or absent
***Typha* spp. Inland Great Plains Herbaceous Vegetation**
10. Soil rarely saturated; *Typha*, *Eleocharis*, and *Scirpus* uncommon; annual and biennial plants conspicuous
***Andropogon gerardii*-*Calamagrostis canadensis*-*Helianthus grosseserratus* Herbaceous Vegetation**
9. Site palustrine, on middle slopes; soils saturated by irrigation or ground water
***Typha* spp.-*Equisetum hyemale*-*Carex* spp. Seep Herbaceous Vegetation**
8. Site upland, never flooded.
11. Community has 10-25% tree canopy cover by *Pinus ponderosa* and *Juniperus scopulorum*. Understory dominated by *Bouteloua gracilis* and *Stipa comata*. Site above 4100 feet.
***Pinus ponderosa* / *Schizachyrium scoparium* Wooded Herbaceous Vegetation**
11. Community has less than 10% tree canopy cover by *Pinus ponderosa* and *Juniperus scopulorum*.
12. Community dominated by exotic grasses and forbs and/or native weedy forbs (the exception is *Pascopyrum smithii* a native grass which is sometimes co-dominant in this community).
***Kochia scoparia*/Bromus spp. Early Seral Community**
12. Community dominated by native grasses and sedges. Exotic grasses and forbs and native weedy forbs may be present but are not dominant except in small localized areas.
13. Dominant species include one or more of the following: *Carex filifolia*, *Bouteloua gracilis*, or *Stipa comata*.

14. *Carex filifolia* cover more than 25% or *Stipa comata* dominant (areas where *Carex filifolia* cover has been reduced by deposition of erosional material or past overgrazing)
***Stipa comata-Bouteloua gracilis-Carex filifolia* Herbaceous Vegetation**
14. *Carex filifolia* cover less than 25%, *Bouteloua gracilis* co-dominant, areas interspersed with rock outcrops, on or near top of bluffs
15. Large steep (60-90%) slopes not present
Rock Outcrop/Prairie Mosaic (Siltstone-Clay Butte Sparse Vegetation and *Stipa comata-Bouteloua gracilis-Carex filifolia* Herbaceous Vegetation)
15. Large, steep (60-90%) slopes present
Cliff/Rock Outcrop/Prairie Mosaic (Inland Siltstone Bluff-Cliff Sparse Vegetation and Siltstone-Clay Butte Sparse Vegetation and *Stipa comata-Bouteloua gracilis-Carex filifolia* Herbaceous Vegetation)
13. Dominant species include one or more of the following: *Pascopyrum smithii*, *Bouteloua curtipendula*, *Schizachyrium scoparium*, *Calamovilfa longifolia*, or *Andropogon hallii*
16. Dominant species including *Calamovilfa longifolia* and/or *Andropogon hallii*; soil sandy; *Yucca glauca* cover usually over 5% (except in draws); *Artemisia filifolia* often present (shrubs <25%)
***Andropogon hallii-Calamovilfa longifolia* Herbaceous Vegetation**

16. Dominant species not including *Calamovilfa longifolia* and/or *Andropogon hallii*; *Yucca glauca* cover less than 5%. *Artemisia filifolia* usually absent.
17. Community an unnatural looking, reseeded grassland on a formerly disturbed site; overall plant diversity extremely low; *Stipa comata* and *Nassella viridula* not abundant.
Mixedgrass Prairie (Reseeded/Restored)
17. Community a natural looking grassland not on a formerly disturbed site overall plant diversity not extremely low. *Stipa comata* and *Nassella viridula* abundant.
***Pascopyrum smithii*
 Herbaceous Vegetation**
1. Site less than 25% vegetated.
 18. Site riverine, mostly bare sand
Riverine Sand Flats-Bars Sparse Vegetation
 18. Site upland, mostly bare rock.
 19. Site consisting of slopes of 60-90% grade; *Mentzelia decapetala* dominant
Inland Siltstone Bluff-Cliff Sparse Vegetation
 19. Site consisting of irregularly-eroded slopes of less than 60% grade; *Mentzelia decapetala* rare (if ever) dominant.
 20. Site less than 10% vegetated (except for small inclusions); % shrub cover (*Atriplex canescens*, *Chrysothamnus nauseosus*) often nearly equal to or exceeding % herbaceous cover; elevation less than 4000 ft
Eroding Great Plains Badlands Sparse Vegetation
 20. Site usually more than 10% vegetated; % shrub cover (*Rhus aromatica*, *Chrysothamnus parryi*, *Kraschennikovia lanata*, *Artemisia filifolia*) usually much less than % herbaceous cover.

- 21. Site situated on sandy or silty soil; elevation often less than 4000 ft.
Eroding Great Plains Bank Sparse Vegetation
- 21. Site situated on sandstone or siltstone outcrops.
- 22. Site situated on sandstone outcrops atop bluffs; elevation more than 4300 ft.
Rock Outcrop/Prairie Mosaic (Siltstone-Clay Butte Sparse Vegetation and *Stipa comata-Bouteloua gracilis*-*Carex filifolia* Herbaceous Vegetation)
- 22. Site situated on siltstone outcrops on sides of bluffs; elevation often less than 4300 ft
Siltstone-Clay Butte Sparse Vegetation